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EXPOSITORY PREACHING.*

By Rev. WILLIAM M. TAYLOR, D. D.,
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1. By expository preaching I understand the presentation in simple and clear phraseology of the meaning of the section of Holy Scripture that is under consideration as viewed in its relation to the purpose of the writer and the context in which it is found; then the distillation therefrom of the principles of permanent importance which underlie the section, and the enforcement of these in their relation to the life of the present day.

2. Every sermon, in my judgment, ought to be an outgrowth from the exposition of the text. But the exposition of a book of Scripture ought to be prosecuted in regular course at one of the services on each Lord's day. This used to be, and very largely is still, the habit in Scotland, and it has greatly contributed to the scriptural intelligence of the churches there.

3. In the prosecution of this work as of others, there will be special aptitudes in the man,—or the reverse,—but I think that no gifts other than those that may easily be acquired by a man of average ability are needed for doing it successfully.

4. The preparation that is most required will involve a familiar acquaintance with the grammar and idioms of the original languages, a patient investigation of the relation of each clause in the section to all the rest, and of the section itself to the object which the author has in view. Add to this a knowledge of the preacher's own heart, an acquaintance

* These suggestions were sent to the Editor in response to the questions concerning Expository Preaching with which the readers of the *STUDENT* have been made familiar in the "Symposium" on that subject which appeared in the May and June issues. The article of Dr. Taylor arrived too late for insertion with the other communications, and its excellence, together with the well-known ability of its author in the line of Expository Preaching, will be a sufficient warrant for presenting it by itself in the present issue.

with the circumstances and needs of his people and a spirit of prayer and a man so furnished will be in my judgment well furnished for the work. But he must not suppose that it is easier to preach after the expository than after the so-called topical manner. Exposition to be successfully done will require greater study than the preparation of a topical sermon.

5. I should recommend those who wish to prosecute the expository method to begin with the narrative portions of the Bible, both for their own sakes and for the sake of the education of their hearers. The four Gospels, or the historical and biographical portions of the Old Testament, or the book of the Acts of the Apostles might be recommended to a beginner; then the Epistles and then the Prophets. Excellent courses of exposition might be found in the Parables and Miracles of our Lord, in separate biographies of one or two of the Apostles, and in the lives of Joseph, Moses, David, Daniel and the like.

6. I do not know of any special reasons why at this day this method should have prominence; but it seems to me that one great purpose of preaching in any age is the explanation and enforcement of the Word of God, and there are some special advantages from doing that in the expository way which are and ought to be obvious to every preacher. For one thing, it would bring both preacher and hearer into direct contact with the Word of God; for another, it would afford opportunity for the treatment of subjects which otherwise might be overlooked, and for exposing evils existing among the people without the preacher's laying himself open to the imputation of having purposely chosen the subject for any personal or local reason.

I have not had time to give to the subject the attention which it deserves; but you will find my views on it set forth at length in the VIIth Lecture of my first Yale course on preaching which has been published by Randolph and Co., under the title of "The Ministry of the Word."